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III.

CHAUCER'S *Troilus and Criseyde*, v, 813-814.

None of the reverend commentators, so far as I have observed, have condescended to tell the story of Cressid's eyebrows. Yet this item in the catalog of the lady's charms has a history and its ups and downs are of some slight interest. Chaucer grants her all the graces of perfect beauty, with one exception :

'And, save hir browes ioyneden y-fere,
Ther nas no lak, in ought I can espyen.'

Boccaccio is silent concerning the eyebrows, apparently realizing that the less said the better. But both Guido and Benoit mention them. Guido (*Historia*, sig. e 2 recto, col. 1, quoted by Hamilton, *The Indebtedness of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde to Guido Delle Colonne's Historia Trojana*, p. 82) says :

'Briseida autem filia Calcas multa fuit speciositate decora nec longa nec brevis nec nimium macilenta, lacteo profusa candore, genis roseis, flavis crinibus. Sed superciliis junctis, quorum junctura dum multa pilositate tumesceret modicam inconvenientiam presentabat.'

Benoit (ll. 5261-5262, quoted by Hamilton, p. 82), also mentions the defect of the eyebrows :

'Mès le sorcil qui li giseient
Auquetes li mesaveineient.'

Mr. Skeat (*Works*, 2. 498), thinks that Chaucer's description of Criseyde is mainly his own invention ; but Mr. Skeat should know better than to suppose that Chaucer would wantonly belittle the beauty of any fair lady, least of all of his heroine. Chaucer is here simply following the lead of his sources, although his sources, at this point, do not happen to be Boccaccio.

But what grudge had Benoit and Guido against their Briseida? If we turn to Dares we shall find the ultimate source of all the later portraits of Briseida or Criseyde. We read in Dares (Teubner ed., p. 17, ll. 7-10) :

'Briseidam formosam non alta statura candidam capillo flavo et molli superciliis junctis oculis venustis corpore aequali blandam affabilem reverendā animo simplici piam.'

Now it is most certain that Dares did not intend to ascribe a defect of feature to Briseis when he spoke of her 'superciliis junctis.' He was, indeed, following the best taste of his time, and in regarding joined eyebrows as a characteristic of beauty, he had behind him the authority of such connoisseurs as Theocritus and Ovid. Thus Theocritus (*Idyllia*, 8. 72) :

κῆμὲ γὰρ ἐκ τῶντρω σύνοφρυν κόρα ἐχθρὲς ἰδοῖσα,

which Mr. Lang translates, 'me, even me, from the cave, the girl with meeting eyebrows spied yesterday.'¹

In his *Ars Amatoria* (3. 200-201), Ovid tells how this charm is to be supplied by art if nature is niggardly :

Sanguine quae vero non rubet, arte rubet.
Arte supercillii confinia nuda repletis.

Who it was—whether Isaac Porphyrogenitus, or Johannes Malalas, Manasses, or Tzetzes—that first turned this grace with which Criseyde started on her career into a defect, I am unable to say; but a defect it became and as such was perpetuated by Guido, Benoit, and even Chaucer. Guido and Benoit we may forgive, for they wrote with the stern impartiality of history. But why did not Chaucer, who wrote merely as poet, follow the good example of Boccaccio?

GEORGE PHILIP KRAPP.

Columbia University.

EXORCISM WITH A STOLE.

ILLUSTRATED BY EXAMPLES IN THE FARCE OF
Maitre Pierre Pathelin, IN *Li jus Adam*, AND
IN THE FABLIAU ENTITLED *Estula*.

When the thick-witted draper, Guillaume Joceume, arrives at the house of Maitre Pathelin, fondly hoping to be paid for the six ells of cloth out of which that crafty lawyer has just swindled him, he is astonished to hear Guillemette

¹ See Fritzsche's edition, p. 290, for other examples and a learned discussion; and note Theocritus, once removed, in Tennyson's *Aënone*, 'loveliest in all grace of movement, and the charm of married brows.'

deny all knowledge of any such transaction.¹ The draper listens in blank amazement, scarcely able to believe his ears. As he is beginning to wonder what really happened, he suddenly hears strange sounds issue from the bed, in which Maître Pierre is tossing in a fever specially performed to dumfound the simple-minded merchant and cheat him. Maître Pierre cries out to Guillemette to give him a little rose water; he asks to be propped up behind, and, having gone through various other weird antics, he pokes his head out between the curtains and stares deliriously at the amazed Joceahme, whom he addresses in these words:—

Tu ne vois pas ce que ie sens :
Vela ung moisne noir qui vole !
Prens le ! baillies luy une estolle !²

One need not be deeply versed in the annals of witchcraft to recall more than a score of wretches who have gone soaring over housetops mounted on a broomstick, and black has usually been the hue of the garb in which enchanters and witches have carried out the behests of the Evil One. We may easily imagine, therefore, the dismay of Joceahme on beholding the wild looks and wilder gestures of Maître Pierre. The draper sees him staring at something on the wing,—a flying monk, clad in black, and Pathelin tells him to catch the monk and give him a stole.

About two centuries earlier we meet precisely the same form of exorcism in *Li jus Adan*; Rikece has scarcely mentioned “Aëlis au dragon” and “Margos as pumetes,” two shrews of Arras, when Guillos humorously cries,

A ! vrais diex ! aporte une estoile !
Chis a nomme deus anemis !³

“Deus anemis” means, of course, “two devils,” and it is perhaps not rash to assume that Guillos crossed himself as he uttered the ominous word.

¹ V. 507 ff.

² This citation is from the edition published at Lyons about 1486 by Guillaume Le Roy. Of Le Roy's *Pathelin* only one copy is believed to exist; there is good ground for supposing this to be the first edition of the farce. Through the kindness of Mr. Rosset, who took the trouble to return home from his country seat in order that he might send his book to Paris, I have an accurate copy of this text and intend to make it the basis of a critical edition. The verses cited are precisely as printed by Le Roy, except the punctuation.

³ V. 302-309.

Another curious example, which belongs also to the thirteenth century, but to a very different kind of literature, bears further witness that exorcism with a stole was a common practice, and shows also how Mediæval folklore could be a valuable asset to Mediæval priests, even though they may often have been summoned to drive off Satan from inconvenient places, and at hours when slumber was doubtless more agreeable than the safest conflicts with His Majesty.

In the *fabliau*⁴ of which a watch-dog named “Estula” is the absent hero we learn how two brothers, hard-pressed by poverty, went one night to rob a “prodon” who owned a bed of cabbages and some sheep. Hearing a marauder break into his fold, the “prodon” cried to his son, who opened the door that led to the garden and shouted “Estula” !⁵ “Yes,” answered the sheep-stealer, “here I am” (Oil, voirement sui je ci). At this the young man was so badly frightened that he ran back into the house.

“Qu’as tu, beaus fiz ?” ce dist li pere.
— “Sire, foi que je doi ma mere,
“Estula parla or a moi.
— Qui ? nostre chiens ? — Voire, par foi ;
Et se croire ne m’en volez,
Huchiez l’errant, parler l’orrez.”
Li prodon maintenant s’en cort
Por la merveille, entre en la cort
Et hucha Estula, son chien.
Et cil qui ne s’en gardoit rien
Li dist : “Voirement sui je ça.”
Li prodon grant merveille en a :
“Par toz sainz et par totes saintes !
Fiz, j’ai oï merveilles maintes :
Onques mais n’oï lor pareilles ;
Va tost, si conte cez merveilles
Al prestre, si l’ameine o toi,
Et li di qu’il aport o soi
L’estole et l’eve beneoite.”

So the son ran to fetch the priest.

“Sire,” dist il, “venez voz ent
En maison oïr granz merveilles ;

⁴ See Montaiglon and Raynaud, *Recueil général et complet des Fabliaux*, Vol. iv, pp. 87-92, or G. Paris and E. Langlois, *Chrestomathie du moyen âge*, Paris, 1903, pp. 153-160, from which text are derived the above citations. In this chrestomathy the fabliau is accompanied by a literal translation.

⁵ This rather primitive pun bears a striking resemblance to the “Outis” with which Odysseus effected his escape from the cave of Polyphemos.

Onques n'oïstes lor pareilles.
 Prenez l'estole a vostre col."
 Dist li prestres : "Tu iés tot fol,
 Qui or me vueus la fors mener :
 Nuz piez sui, n'i porroie aler."
 Et cil li respont senz delai :
 "Si ferez ; je vos porterai."
 Li prestres a prise l'estole,
 Si monte senz plus de parole.

The remainder of the story is highly comic but it is not relevant. What it makes perfectly clear is that on such an occasion a priest needed his stole, and to have left it behind would have been as bad a mistake as for a modern surgeon to rush to the scene of an accident without his saw, or other indispensable instruments. Furthermore, the son of the "prodon" was so thoroughly imbued with belief in the efficacy of a stole when the devil was abroad that he did not fail to remind the priest to bring one along, notwithstanding the fact that he had just been frightened half out of his wits.

RICHARD HOLBROOK.

Columbia University.

NEW FACTS CONCERNING THE LIFE OF EDMUND SPENSER.

There has been some doubt concerning the whereabouts of the poet Spenser between the years 1582, when Arthur Grey, Lord Deputy of Ireland, was recalled to England, and 1589 when Raleigh visited him at Kilcolman.

Craik in his *Spenser and His Poetry* says,—
 "Lord Grey resigned his government in the end of August, 1582 ; and he and Spenser are supposed to have come back to England, as they left it, together."

Hales in the Globe edition says,—
 "It may be considered as fairly certain that when his lordship returned to England in 1582, Spenser did not return with him, but abode still in Ireland"; and again later,—
 "Whatever glimpses we can catch of Spenser during these ten years, he is in Ireland." He then quotes the passage from Lodowick Bryskett's *Discourse of Civill Life*, familiar to all who have studied the poet's life, which refers to a meeting that took place in

Dublin probably between the years 1584 and 1589 (for Dr. Long who is mentioned then as Primate of Armagh was consecrated in 1584) ; and again quotes the date of a sonnet addressed to Gabriel Harvey in July, 1586, from Dublin.

These facts are explicit enough and point to the fact that at any rate during the year 1586 he was in Dublin, and perhaps before. We know, too, that the grant of Kilcolman was made the 27th of June, 1586, and that he did not resign his chancery clerkship until 1588, which seems a good date for him to have entered into possession of his estate.

To these facts, however, I would add others which will render it beyond doubt, not only that he was in Ireland during most of these years, but that he was actively engaged in military affairs, something we are led to suspect, for when in 1598 he was appointed Sheriff of Cork, he is expressly said to be a man experienced in the wars.

Now, Lord Grey left Ireland in August, 1582.

According to the Reports of Deputy Keeper of Public Records of Ireland, under "Fiantis Elizabeth," occur the following :—

"1582, August 24. Lease (under commission 15 July xxii) to Edmund Spenser Gent, of the site of the house of friars called New Abbey, Co. Kildare, with appurtenances ; also an old waste tower adjoining, and its appurtenances in the Queen's disposition by the rebellion of James Eustace. To hold for 21 years. Rent £3. (Provided he shall not alien to any except they be English both by father or mother, or born in the Pale : and shall not charge coyne or livery. Fine £20)."

1583, May 12 xxv.

"Commission to Henry Cowley knt."—and 26 others among them, Edmund Spenser of "New Abay," "to be commissioners of musters in Co. of Kildare, its crosses and marches ; to summon all the subjects of each barony, and them so mustered to assess in warlike apparel, arms, horses, horsemen and footmen, according to the quantity of their lands and goods, according to the ancient customs and laws of the kingdom and the instructions of the lord justices."

1584, July 4 xxvi.

Commission to many of the above among them Edmund Spenser—"to call before them all the subjects in each barony of the Co. Kildare," etc.